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4 November 1981

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director, National Foreign Assessment  
THROUGH : Chief, Management & Analysis Support Staff  
FROM : Senior Review Panel  
SUBJECT : FY 1981 Annual Report

OVERVIEW

Since its establishment in November 1978, the Senior Review Panel has provided an independent, collegial and substantive review and evaluation of major NFAC and inter-agency intelligence products, designed to improve their quality, usefulness and policy relevance. The Panel has maintained a continuous dialogue with the DD/NFA and the National Intelligence Council during this period. The Panel completed an evaluation of the quality of NFAC finished intelligence produced during a 12-month period; carried out a number of special projects as tasked by the DCI and the DD/NFA; and made a summary assessment of inter-agency and NFAC production in support of major foreign policy issue discussions in the two periods, 1981 and 1979-80, as requested by the DCI.

MAJOR SUBSTANTIVE ENDEAVORS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTSReview of Major Interagency Draft Papers

The Panel's examination of interagency papers is intended to help assure that drafts: point up the issues in a form most useful for policymakers--including an assessment of alternative possibilities and their policy implications; provide balanced coverage of the critical issues in all relevant aspects; sharply define and well present differences in expressed views; and where appropriate, reflect the views of qualified outside individuals and panels.

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Its review covered over 50 NIEs, SNIEs, and IIMs at various stages of preparation, beginning with concept papers, and resulted in over 70 memoranda of comment.

### Evaluation of Intelligence Products

The Panel completed on 11 March 1981 the second phase of a formal evaluation of all NFAC production during a period of one year, excluding interagency papers and daily publications. In Phase I, a comprehensive survey and quantitative analysis, assessing the breadth and adequacy of NFAC's intelligence coverage and the effectiveness of its management information systems, had been carried out. Phase II comprised an evaluation of the quality of that production, both Office-by-Office and for NFAC as a whole, including timeliness, relevance, analytical validity, and breadth of scope.

The Panel reviewed 1980-81 non-military interagency papers and commented on recurrent, but by no means universal, shortcomings. Its conclusions appear in a memorandum for the Chairman, NIC, dated 2 April 1981, "SRP Observations on Drafts of Recent Interagency Papers."

At the request of the Director, NFAC, the Panel provided a rapid assessment of all NFAC formal production for April 1981, commenting on both quantity and quality of the products and offering suggestions on the publication process.

The Panel prepared at the DCI's request a summary evaluation of the timeliness, adequacy, and quality of available intelligence support relating to selected major policy issues that have confronted the Administration since 20 January 1981, compared with performance in 1979 and 1980.

### Post-Mortems of Intelligence Community Performance

The Panel, at the request of the DCI, is in the process of examining the Intelligence Community performance with respect to the Soviet ALFA-class submarine. The study will seek to determine what can be learned about collection and analysis relating to major, long-term Soviet weapons development programs that may help to accelerate and improve the process in the future.

### Intelligence Coverage

The Panel prepared several papers commenting on perceived gaps in coverage. Some of the subjects explored were: the need for a larger framework for structuring NIEs dealing with the Soviet Union; a proposal for an interagency paper on the Intra-Regional Military Balance in the Central American-Caribbean Region, 1981-85; net assessments in National Intelligence; analysis of Iraq-Iran War.

### Other Activities

After the November 1980 Presidential election, the Panel met a number of times with members of the CIA transition team, at the latter's request, to discuss interagency and NFAC production and processes. A subcommittee of the transition team was authorized to review SRP memoranda commenting on certain areas of Agency analysis. After the transition team completed its work, the Panel continued this dialogue with Mr. John Bross, Special Adviser to the DCI.

In addition to the collegial activities described above, Panel members have from time to time taken on ad hoc individual tasks associated with NIC or NFAC activities: they included preparatory steps for the updating of NIE-11/12 on "Soviet Military Technology and Research and Development" and management of the interagency consideration of SNIE-11/2-81, "Soviet Support for International Terrorism." Individual members have also been asked to serve on NIC review panels considering draft interagency papers. Through its established contacts with policymakers and senior-level officers in the Intelligence Community, the Panel as a group and individually has maintained on an informal basis a continuing dialogue on requirements for, and reactions to, intelligence production.

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FUTURE DIRECTION

The Panel believes that there is continuing value in the basic concept of an off-line Panel--with members drawn from diverse backgrounds, policymaking experience, and professional expertise--to provide a systematic review and evaluation of the effectiveness with which the Intelligence Community carries out its major projects.

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